DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 072 526 EA 004 841

TITLE	Expanding Volunteers in Teaching and Learning Programs. An I/D/E/A/ Occasional Paper.
INSTITUTION	Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Dayton, Ohio.
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	40p.; A report to the educators and school volunteer leaders based on a national seminar
AVAILABLE FROM	I/D/E/A, Mail Orders, P. O. Box 628, Far Hills Branch, Dayton, Ohio 45419 ($2.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Community Involvement; Cost Effectiveness; Educational Innovation; *Individualized Instruction; *Paraprofessional School Personnel; *Public Schools; School Aides; Teacher Aides; Teaching Assistants; *Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*Teacher Volunteer Relationship

ABSTRACT

This report stresses the positive role volunteers can play in helping schools individualize instruction and motivate students. It discusses the need for a national and/or State organization to better coordinate volunteer activities in different areas. The report reveals some of the obstacles that make the use of volunteers difficult, discusses ways of dealing with these problems, and examines the relationship between teacher and volunteer. A definite structure is considered essential to both a successful volunteer program and to volunteer training. The report discusses the importance of a volunteer coordinator, the role of the volunteer in educational innovation, and the means by which a volunteer program could be monitored and evaluated. (DN)

EA 004 841

ED 072526

IDEA

vital

expanding volunteers in teaching and learning programs

AN IDEA OCCASIONAL PAPER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

expanding in and

"The most powerful force on earth is the spontaneous cooperation of a free people."

Woodrow Wilson

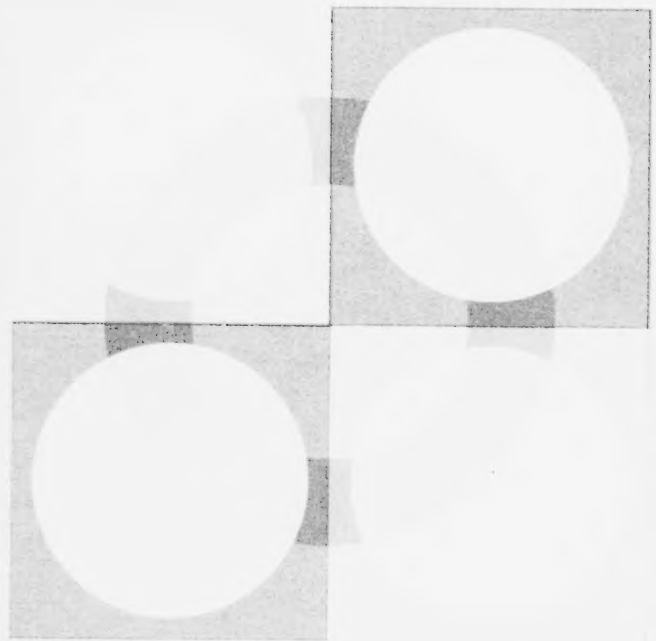
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

IDEA

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

Copyright © 1972 by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., All Rights Reserved.

volunteers teaching learning programs



A report to educators and school volunteer leaders
based on a national seminar sponsored by the
Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc.,
an affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

BECOME
A SCHOOL
VOLUNTEER

table of contents

	Page
Where Have All the Dollars Gone?	5
Volunteers in Education — The Schools' *Amicus Curiae*	6
Volunteers in Education Organizations as Motherless Children	8
The Old Chestnut — Tutor, Reinforcer, Resource, but Never a Teacher	9
Educators, Traditions, Parents, and Other Roadblocks	11
Structure Equals Success in Volunteer Programs	13
Avoiding the Thistles	13
The Vital Program's Vital Element	14
Volunteers — Unencumbered by Tradition	14
Training — A Key Ingredient	15
Volunteers as a Source of Enrichment	16
What the Volunteer Can Do	18
Buttressing the Program with Volunteers	19
Proving the Case for Volunteers	20
Volunteers — Interregna to the Community-Centered School	20

chairmen

John E. Codwell
Superintendent, Area IV
Houston Independent
School District
Houston, Texas

Lee Hamilton, Vice President
Manager of Education
Department
National Association of
Manufacturers
New York, New York

participants

Lucille Abrahamson
President, San Francisco
Education Auxiliary
San Francisco Unified
School District
San Francisco, California

Howard H. Bede
Consultant for Volunteer
Services
Winnetka, Illinois Schools
Highland Park, Illinois

Isabel G. Besecker
Director
School Volunteers for Boston
Boston, Massachusetts

Elaine J. Coari
Director, Office of School
Volunteer Services
New Orleans Public Schools
New Orleans, Louisiana

William J. Coffia
Associate Dean for Education
Oklahoma City University
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Sarah A. Davis
Director, Volunteer &
Tutorial Programs
Los Angeles City Unified
School District
Los Angeles, California

Peter J. Dugan
Superintendent of Schools
Englewood Public Schools
Englewood, New Jersey

Irene C. Hypps, Director
Project VOICE
Washington Technical
Institute
Washington, D.C.

Juanita L. Jones
High Challenge Director
Tulsa Public Schools
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Evelyn LeVine
Volunteers in Education
Coordinator
The School District of
Kansas City, Missouri
Kansas City, Missouri

Jean Davis Meyers
Director, Volunteers in
Public Schools
Houston Independent School
District
Houston, Texas

Carol O'Connell
Volunteers in Education
Coordinator
Ohio Department of
Education
Columbus, Ohio

Lynne C. Pike
Volunteer Assistant
The American National
Red Cross
Washington, D.C.

Helga Roth
Vice President for
Program Information
National Center for
Voluntary Action
Washington, D.C.

Robin F. Spaulding
Coordinator, School
Volunteers for Worcester
The Public Schools
of Worcester
Worcester, Massachusetts

Mary T. Swanson
Associate Director,
Project MOTIVATE
Des Moines Area
Community College
Ankeny, Iowa

Jane E. VanderWolk
Director
School Volunteer Program of
New Hampshire
Manchester, New Hampshire

Grace E. Watson
Director of Volunteers
in Education
Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Washington, D.C.

representing IDEA

B. Frank Brown
Director
Information & Services
Program
Melbourne, Florida

Jon R. Kinghorn
In-Service Specialist
Innovative Programs
Dayton, Ohio

conference reporter

W. Arthur Darling
Information & Services
Program
Melbourne, Florida

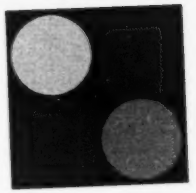
where have all the dollars gone?

State and local expenditures for education have grown from $6.5 billion in 1947 to approximately $68 billion in 1969. This is more than a 1000% increase in expenditures for education in a time when the gross national product (G.N.P.) went from $234.3 billion to $931.4 billion, an increase of 400%. If continued at this rate, it is estimated that in the year 2080, the entire G.N.P. would be needed for education.

The phenomenal rise in teachers' salaries accounts for the above lopsided figures. However, one must bear in mind that teachers were a grossly underpaid professional group in the late 40's and early 50's. They have been rapidly catching up. Still, a lid is needed for this boiling pot of rising expense. A rather inconspicuous group of concerned people have been pulled to the center of the educational stage as one way to stem the growing cost of education. These people call themselves volunteers in education.

To ascertain just what the status of volunteers is in the matter of teaching and learning as well as to determine the roadblocks to their expanded use, the Charles F. Kettering Foundation's Institute for Development of Educational Activities conducted a national seminar to explore this proliferating activity.

volunteers in education – the schools' *amicus curiae*



The professional emphasis in recent years among educators has been toward upgrading the duties of the certified teacher to give students the maximum benefit of the diagnostic and prescriptive abilities of this experienced and highly trained individual. In spite of this effort much of the teacher's time is still spent in quasi-teaching duties, which, although necessary, are poor use of expensive professional talent.

From the student's viewpoint, the nonprofessional demands upon the teacher's time mean that enough personal help is seldom available. This is true not only for diagnosing particular problems but for assistance in doing assignments and for giving the hours of individualized, personal attention in directed learning which are necessary for steady development in accordance with the student's potential. The result is that much of the student's time is spent waiting for an answer, needing clarification of directions, or working at a level somewhat easy or too difficult for optimum progress. Given the ratio of student hours to teacher hours, probably more questions go unasked than are answered during a class.

If the teacher of a class of 28 children was to spend her entire time on individual instruction, in the course of a six-hour day, each student would receive approximately 13 minutes of such instruction. Few students receive even this small amount of personal time. Being responsible for directing the learning activities of

the entire group, the teacher seldom has time for more than an occasional brief period of individual assistance when a special learning need can be met. With all due respect to the vast quantity of "individualized instructional materials" that has been produced to meet this problem, what is needed is more genuine, face-to-face individual attention. A survey by The Alberta Human Resources Research Council of various individualization programs in schools revealed that the learner was largely neglected in prominent curriculum development programs.

In an effort to reduce group size in order for students to be closer to the teacher for instruction, especially during basic skill lesson periods such as reading, many schools now group students by ability. A teacher will work with a group of six to 10 students and will assign other students individual skills exercises or work with special learning aids. While the teacher is involved with one group, remaining students are working to the best of their abilities with the assignments given them. Here, under conventional organization, an important opportunity is missed for students to receive individual help. Learning the complex skills and work patterns associated with reading takes a certain amount of individual, one-to-one attention. The fact that children seldom receive but a fraction of such attention from which they could benefit means that reading progress is slower than otherwise possible.

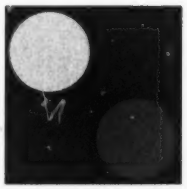
An alternative to this situation is the use of volunteers. Without increasing the cost of education, this means a much reduced ratio of students to adult personnel. Utilizing volunteers allows the teacher to be much more effective with the group under instruction, while giving students in other groups a source of individual help. Through the aid of volunteers, the teacher is able to do more diagnostic functions. Meanwhile, the volunteer works with various students on those skills which need to be strengthened using materials selected and prescribed by the professional teacher.

Schools which have utilized nonprofessional volunteers report that the teachers worked better and that dealing with student problems was much enhanced. *With two or more adults in the classroom, discipline problems and teacher fatigue are reduced.*

Classes run smoother with a higher degree of purposeful activity. Teachers are relaxed and, as a result, are more effective. Subgrouping and scheduling of students for small-group instruction becomes possible with students getting much more individual attention. In essence, volunteers in teaching and learning become for the students the helping hands guided by the professional arms of the teacher.

The volunteer must be free to construct or utilize any materials he thinks will break the mental roadblock a particular student under his direction has to learning. The major problem in working with the under-achieving child is motivation. Success here will hinge largely upon finding activities that will hold the student's interest. These activities can include gadgets, pictures, museum items, games, model airplanes, films, or audio tapes. A careful conversation with the student will divulge where his interests lie.

Much to the teacher's surprise, the volunteer often has a better understanding of the student than the professional. However, this comes as a result of the one-to-one working relationship. Greater adult-student contact and individuals with the time and willingness to work on an ancillary one-to-one basis are the most valuable and least used roles the volunteer can fill in the classroom. Yet, the volunteer can perform these duties at little or no additional cost to the school system.



volunteers in education organizations as motherless children

"Judging from our experience and that of other school systems with healthy volunteer activities, we have concluded that the first public move toward a volunteer program should come from the community. It is then up to the school system to provide the kind of reception that will encourage the community and keep the idea alive," a seminar participant reported.

The volunteer movement in education is a true grass-roots phenomenon at this time. From a national point of view, volunteers and voluntary organizations have no place to go to find out what their peers are doing in other groups. The seminar identified a definite lack of communication between local volunteer groups about their respective programs.

Information about volunteer programs is one thing that is sorely lacking. Interested parties do not know how or what to do even though they know there is something that needs to be done. One observer maintained that the only support forthcoming from the federal level is an effort to generate interest at the state and local levels which have the bulk of money for program support.

The federal government's concern at this time is maintaining support for the school volunteer program. Since these programs have become far more numerous than anyone ever expected and more wanted by the school administration, the need was cited for an independent national organization in order to give cohesiveness to the multitudinous programs proliferating at the local level. "We need to have some kind of dissemination of information so that others will know what is going on, where things are happening, where new developments are taking place, and how a group of volunteers can improve their own program. The volunteer effort needs an agency for dissemination, technical assistance, some kind of regular moral and, possibly, financial support. This does not mean government support, as the program will be far stronger if it is nongovernmental in nature."

One effort at the national level in the area of program dissemination is The National Clearinghouse for Volunteers (1735 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006) which is trying to find out who is doing what for whom in volunteerism around the nation. It provides two basic tools to the volunteer. One is a program description. It now has nearly 5,000 program descriptions in all areas of voluntaryism including the whole field of education. The second is a reference listing of material which organizations have developed and which, if they can be made available, other groups can obtain either free or for a small fee. In this way groups just getting started do not have to write another manual on organizing, recruiting, or training.

At this time, the lead in volunteer program development is being taken at the state level. This state participation is making the program legitimate. It makes people feel that it is a part of the educational establishment. Hence, the state route is one logical way of proceeding and expanding the whole concept of volunteerism.

The problem is that the volunteer coordinator is selected by the chief school officer of the state. Too often, the person who is selected has no familiarity with or empathy for volunteer programs. One seminar participant was called by the newly appointed state coordinator who wanted to know about the existing volunteer programs in education in his state.

Volunteer programs have been started in a variety of ways, most of which were represented at the seminar. They may come as the idea of the school superintendent or a school board member. Sometimes a school principal or teacher initiates a small effort. In other cases, an inspired citizen works tirelessly to interest the school system in starting a program. In a few instances, a state office is set up to make contact, sanction, and coordinate local programs.

Ideally, the volunteer program should come from the administrative level. As it is now, dedicated groups have to demonstrate and justify the program before they can get the institutional interest and backing. Unless the volunteer program is going to be well planned, organized, and evaluated as it goes along, it will miss some of the larger goals that are inherent in such an effort.

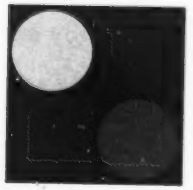
"We have found in our efforts that the superintendent is one of the best individuals to get on the side of volunteer programs," a volunteer veteran disclosed. "The board of education is farther down the line in its importance. Principals rank equally in importance with the superintendent. Teachers must be oriented and convinced of the importance of the program. If

a teacher does not want volunteers in his classroom, all well and good; he likely will see the benefits accruing to those who are using volunteers and will seek their services. The same is true of schools."

This participant emphasized the need for a catalytic agent whether that be a community person or an educator. It is not the structure or organization of the program that will get it off the ground initially. It is that individual who is willing to put in the time and effort to get the program started. This individual must be present in the community. If a program is just being planned, the first order of business is to go around to all the civic groups until this person, who must possess some charisma, is located and enlisted into the program.

Each community should have a local voluntary action center. This center combines the traditional function of the volunteer doer providing a place where the citizen who wants to volunteer can find out about the multitudinous opportunities available in the community and get some counseling where he or she would do best. The other function of the center is the information and referral function, meaning that the client who needs help can call up and say "Where do I find help?" He will then be referred to an agency that can take care of his needs. The third function, which only a few agencies around the country are doing and is the most advanced, is planning for coordination of all volunteer services.

It would be ideal if schools, community mental health centers, and courts could come to one group and say, "We are ready for a volunteer program. Can you give us some technical assistance in how we start one?" Most volunteer bureaus operate in the private sector. They are the most underadvertised resource group in the nation. Whenever they are funded, it is usually through the United Appeal.



the old chestnut — tutor, reinforcer, resource, but never a teacher

"Every profession protects itself with a vocabulary, and education is no exception. Volunteers can do themselves a great service by avoiding this jargon." This sage advice came from a lively discussion of whether a volunteer's activity in the classroom is considered "teaching."

The notion that volunteers reinforce a student's learning rather than teach per se elicited a great deal of dialogue. "I think the word 'reinforce' is used to get around some of the roadblocks that are imposed — real or imagined — at levels a little bit higher than that at which we are operating. For example, at the state level they say a child must be under the supervision of a certified teacher, so we say that a volunteer does not teach. She or he reinforces. If reinforcing is not teaching, then what is teaching?" This conferee contended that it is just a play on words. "If we are using volunteers and we

recognize they are an integral part of the teaching-learning process, then they are teaching."

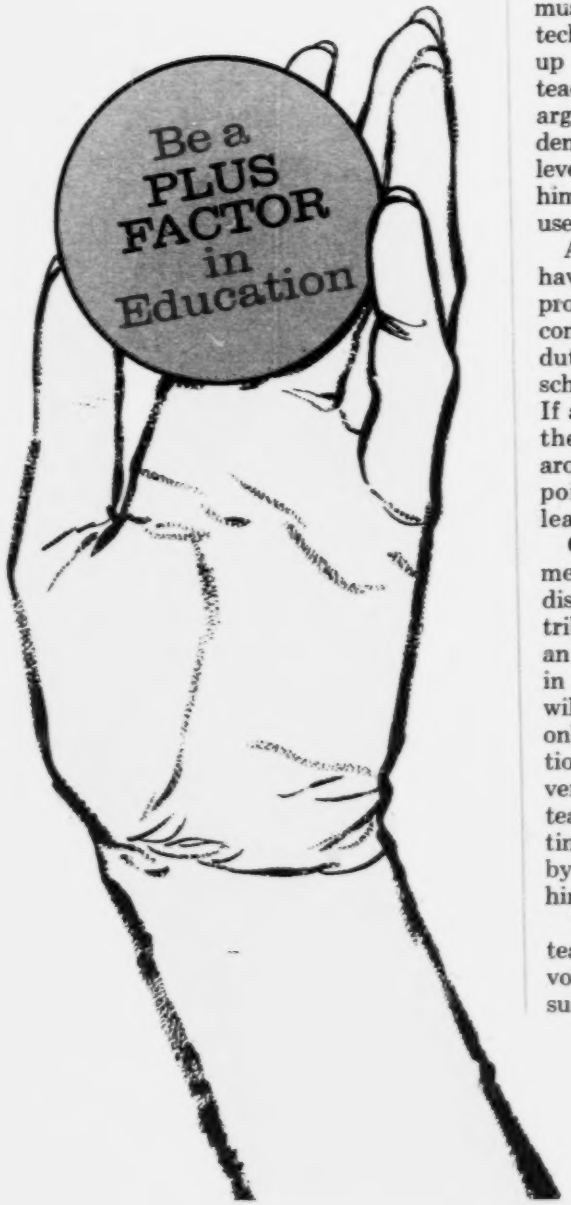
The fact that volunteers may be more sensitive to their use in the classroom than the teachers is illustrated by the following policy statement issued by the American Federation of Teachers.

> "There is a place for lay volunteer assistance within the school setting . . . (but) the use of these volunteers must be restricted to those activities approved by the teacher, and under no circumstances must a teacher be forced to use or supervise a lay person . . . the direction, control, and responsibility for the educational process must rest firmly with the teacher."

The teacher gives the initial instruction and then it is up to the volunteer to do the reinforcement. "The teacher's responsibility is content and techniques," one participant commented. "Teachers provide the nucleus of knowledge while the volunteer nourishes it into lush growth." The teacher develops the concepts, and the volunteer carries out the backup work. Volunteers are used in many classrooms to increase the student's readiness for learning. Such activities can cover a lot of territory.

"I think this whole discussion is a mere matter of semantics. We need to change attitudes, not terms," a coordinator quipped. "Volunteers are members of the professional team in the classroom."

This group agreed unanimously that when volunteers feel they are an integral part of the school team, they are more likely to impart to the community an appreciation and understanding of the job being done by school personnel. Teachers should realize they are the supervisors of teaching teams that include student teachers, observers, aides, and volunteers. Teachers need these supportive persons and services.



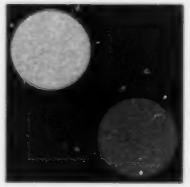
"Especially with slow learners, the school must be ready and willing to use any resource, technique, or method to bring those individuals up to class level. Whether the volunteer is teaching or reinforcing is purely an academic argument if what he does with this type of student raises the student's comprehension and level of understanding. The educator highlights himself as an inhuman egotist if he refuses the use of volunteers in such instances."

Another participant insisted that volunteers have got to be allowed to teach. "One of the problems is that they have been frustrated by coming in and being given little namby-pamby duties. They drop out of the program and the school gains another instant critic as a result." If a teacher is good, he is secure enough to let the volunteer try divergent techniques in arousing the reluctant student's intellect to a point of new interest and enthusiasm in learning.

One discussant told the group about an elementary school with 1,200 students in his district that reported no nonreaders. He attributed this happy situation to the fact that an average of five volunteer aides are working in the first grade of that school at all times. "I will not undersell the volunteer aide, but it is only through the classroom teacher's cooperation that we have been able to do this. We are very open and honest in our dealings with the teacher. He is in charge of that classroom at all times. You do not get this kind of cooperation by being threatening or going in to threaten him."

The argument as to whether a volunteer is teaching or reinforcing is academic. What the volunteer must be in order for the program to succeed is a "nonthreatening intervener."

educators, traditions, parents, and other roadblocks



A major objective of the seminar was the delineation of roadblocks to the effective use of volunteers. Not surprisingly, the first identified roadblocks were school administrators, shy and insecure teachers, and teacher unions. "In many cases, this is just a matter of understanding. You need to show the union that volunteers will not replace teachers or paid aides. We put a representative of the teacher's union on our governing board. That person quickly saw the value of volunteers and became one of our best spokesmen."

A second coordinator narrowed her initial efforts at convincing and winning over the administrators. "Get them on your side, then everything goes smoothly." Another participant accomplished this goal by getting administrators and volunteers and, separately, teachers and volunteers into workshop buzz groups. "This eliminated fears and brought about quick realization of what these volunteers could mean in the classroom." This in-service training of teachers and administrators is one way of overcoming teacher shyness and resistance.

"If you're coming to help me, you are welcome. If you're coming to criticize me or make more work for me, I want no part of it." This is the attitude one volunteer coordinator has heard numerous times from teachers. Such attitudes come as a result of bitter experiences where teachers have been offered help in the past that did not turn out to be help. "I think the 'soft-sell approach' is important in advancing the volunteer program. Do not force a volunteer on a teacher. There are usually too many teachers who need and want volunteers."

This also is true for a school. The effective utilization of volunteers in one school will soon make their importance and usefulness apparent to other school administrators and teachers. In one program principals are recruiting volunteers from their own surrounding areas, then trainers come in from the central volunteer office to give the proper orientation training.

The school administrator must have a commitment to voluntaryism as an integral part of the teaching-learning situation. More important, his commitment has to be to an ongoing involvement of volunteers. "We use the administrators from the central office as well as school principals in our orientation and in-service training. The volunteers are impressed that these people are willing to spend the time with them, and the administrators are struck by the contagious enthusiasm inherent in virtually every true volunteer." This individual related how 100 of 114 paid volunteer coordinators continued on a gratis basis after the money ran out on a federal project. "The spirit of the volunteer cannot be funded."

Another roadblock is the prevailing attitude among principals and teachers that "If we cannot do it, how can a nonprofessional volunteer?" An educator entered the discussion at this point. "We must find some way to train teachers to use volunteers. Teachers should be the first to recognize the fact that although they have had four years of education courses, they do not have the recipe or any other panacea for learning. Sometimes working with a different person is all that is needed for a particular student."

The group laid a great deal of the blame and responsibility of the teacher fear of volunteers at the doors of the teacher-training institutions. "They do not enlighten the novice teacher that anyone else in the community could possibly be of any help to him." A participant related how this problem is being overcome in one college. "A volunteer system has been built into the college. The undergraduate students make excellent volunteer tutors. They get credit for this work which they undertake on a regular basis. Then when they become teachers, they know how to utilize volunteers. A side benefit of such a program is that it gives the prospective teacher an opportunity to know firsthand if teaching is really the profession he wants to enter. The accreditation people of the state like it because the newly graduated teacher has had considerable classroom experience.

"I have seen very smug young people academically, particularly at the graduate level, get tremendously involved when they are in direct contact with a child in a volunteer situation." This discussant contended these individuals have to be better teachers because of such an experience. "There are two values that we must press for. One is for teacher training institutions to assume the responsibility for broadening the experience of the teacher trainees so they become involved through direct contact with the volunteer experiences and needs of the community.

"The second value is that we prepare the schools to use the volunteers. This preorientation to volunteerism is important. I have seen classroom-experienced graduate students who did not realize what the problems of their students were until they were involved in a practicum."

A significant roadblock is the view of many administrators that volunteers in the school are a group of people over whom he has no control. "When you have a paid aide, you have him for five days a week," one observer stated bluntly. "When you have a volunteer, you are not likely to have him for that length of time all at once." To this, another participant

commented, "When you have a paid aide, you have complete control of the person. This person will do what the teacher and administration want him to do because he wants to keep his job."

In some cases, the retention of volunteers is a roadblock to the program's success. "A lot of times this can be the volunteer coordinator's fault," a discussant stated. "A professional approach in dealing with volunteers is important. I welcome each new volunteer by letter. The principal is told by letter about this volunteer and what he or she can do. Assignments are made by letter in which I tell them to call the school if they cannot make their scheduled time. I ask the school to follow up on an absent volunteer and send me a report of the incident. This way we can weed out irresponsible individuals and the professional educators understand the seriousness of our effort and the high degree of our organization."

A supposition exists that any volunteer program manned by nonpaid people is low in its level of organization. This is not true. The group assembled for this seminar testified to the absolute necessity for structure and central office support. Most programs have a coordinator at each school as well as a district coordinator. All of the programs represented included a strong emphasis on orientation and in-service training to keep the program at a level of maximum value to the students they are designed to serve.

"The difference between the volunteer and the paid aide is a matter of commitment to a fellow human being." This experienced volunteer related how, after giving her report to the school board, the board president said, "Your enthusiasm for this program is so contagious that I will follow you anywhere." This enterprising coordinator responded, "Fine, I have a job for you." The board president is working now with a potential dropout student. "I have found that everyone is receptive and willing to do something if you can just tell him where and how to do it!"

The differences in attitudes in two states which exist side by side, in communities within a state, and even between individual schools within a metropolitan area will dictate how a volunteer program is set up and what roadblocks it must overcome on its way to acceptance and success.

"The volunteer program can do wonders in a situation where the school administration and teachers want us." Educators have labored under the assumption that no news is good news. They resent what they consider layman's interference in their area of professional competence and responsibility. While publicly endorsing citizen involvement in schools, most educators practice discouragement of any meaningful service, if not outright hostility. Much of this animosity stems from the self-appointed, ad hoc, vigilante, or extremist groups that educators have tangled with over the years.

"Generally speaking, I feel that our program is taking off like a rocket," a coordinator for a large rural area observed. "There is evidence of a real change in attitude on the part of the professional educator. I see a willingness to let people walk into the school. I can remember when my own children were in school that you really hesitated to walk through that door unless it was an official open house or you had been summoned to hear the bad news about your offspring. This is not as true today." In order that they not become a roadblock, parents must be provided with well-developed and complete information about the volunteer program. They need to know how it is funded and organized, who is responsible, and what it can mean to their children. In all cases, permission must be secured from parents before their children are assigned to a volunteer tutor.

structure equals success in volunteer programs

If volunteers are to have an understanding of the school as well as a concern for the children, they must have some kind of orientation training that will give them a greater understanding of how to define some of the needs of the students with whom they will be working.

One participant reported how the original volunteer program in her area died an early death because volunteers were recruited and sent into the schools, but the educators were not prepared to use them. The resulting disillusionment ended with the demise of that effort.

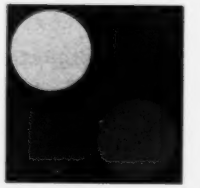
The program now operating successfully in the same district is highly structured. It includes a great deal of training for the teachers and administrators as well as the volunteers. Job descriptions were written for every volunteer service the group expected to provide. This gives the volunteer and the teacher a clear idea of what is expected. "We have emphasized training of teachers. Through a grant from a local civic group, we were able to hire a training coordinator who is a former teacher. This has been responsible in large part for the expansion of our program and the retention of volunteers." This participant also has made use of players from the local professional football team in selling the program through short television public service announcements.

In establishing a program, the newly appointed coordinator should look at his own resources. This means reviewing the school needs, the teacher needs, and the student needs. In that way he can prepare his program's objectives and make them realistic as he looks at what resources he has available in the surrounding community. He will have to design a procedure for coordinating this program.

Since the initial influx of volunteers for a new program will determine its degree of success, it is important that an effort be made to develop a corps of dedicated, well-trained volunteers. These volunteers must have a clear picture of what they will be doing. Many professionals may be apprehensive about having volunteers working with or near them. Therefore, the volunteers in a new program must be able to carry out their tasks while causing as few interruptions or intrusions as possible.

A program cannot succeed unless the preliminary work is carried out in cooperation with the schools. The school principal is a definite link that must be dealt with before one can have a working program. He, in turn, interprets the program to the teachers. Without coordination, no program is going to work effectively. This is the key to the successful volunteer program. It simply will not grow like a weed. It takes a high degree of professional-type organization with documented controls. The printed trappings of successful volunteer programs represented at the seminar included certificate of service awards, volunteer job descriptions, individual's interest inventory, volunteer's service record, volunteer application blanks, a code of ethics for volunteers, volunteer assignment form, and a volunteer requisition form for school principals and teachers.

avoiding the thistles



There are certain requirements to which any new volunteer must adhere. The volunteer must be able to accept children on their own terms. *The volunteer should be willing to give a minimum of one morning or afternoon of his time per week*, although many volunteers give a great deal more — as much as five half-days a week or even three full days.

The volunteer can reinforce the work of the teacher in developing within children a love of books. This can be done by reading to the child stories of great interest, by telling part of an appropriate story and then suggesting that the child complete the book himself, reading highly rhythmic poetry aloud, and by being a good audience when the student wishes to tell or read something of interest to him.

Assistance of this type provides the aid and support that a concerned volunteer can and often does provide. This work demands a definite commitment. The volunteer should never start unless he can be faithful throughout the program. Few things will kill a tutee's faith in his tutor and the program quicker than having a tutor who fails to appear at a scheduled session.

Sometimes, in an effort to be helpful, a volunteer can do more harm than good. This happens when a student is offered help in a patronizing or condescending way which can compound the very feelings of inadequacy he is trying to help the student overcome. Volunteer tutors must assume the approach of talking with the student rather than talking at him. It

is a matter of having empathy for the student's problems.

It is important that volunteers resist the temptation to criticize the schools as a means of identifying with the tutee. The volunteer should attempt to improve his tutee's attitude toward teachers and schools. This approach will allow the benefits of tutoring to carry over to the school. If the volunteer has questions about the school's instructional program, its policies, or its procedures, these should be discussed with the teacher or the principal.

How does a volunteer evaluate his progress with a particular child? In the final analysis, if the volunteer has succeeded over a period of time in causing the child to develop a positive attitude toward school and learning, an invaluable service has been performed. The volunteer has created the atmosphere in which learning can and will grow.

"When the volunteer enters a classroom or meets a student after school, he must be prepared with more than good intentions." If a volunteer is working at the high-school level, competency in a subject area like algebra or German is required. If he is to tutor elementary or middle-school youngsters, then a good volunteer training program can prepare him.

No volunteer should enter the school unless he or she has had some professional training in how to work with the children. This does not mean that a person has to have any particular educational background. The training can be geared to the volunteer who may not have any educational background.

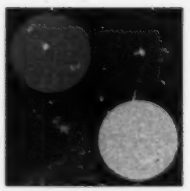
A coordinator should be selected for every school in which volunteers work. This is so the work does not become an added burden for the teachers. The coordinator gets requests from the teachers, relays them to the central office, and establishes schedules for the incoming volunteers.

the vital program's vital element

The volunteer program coordinator is an essential ingredient of success in the planning and operation of a volunteer program. He matches teacher requests and student needs to volunteer services. The coordinator is responsible for preparing personnel practices for the volunteers in cooperation with school personnel to include professional supervision, insurance coverage, and medical standards for volunteers. He must establish a pool of volunteer talent in the community in order to assure adequate, efficient, and continuing volunteer service. A budget must be prepared and means determined for securing the necessary funding.

The coordinator must set up an effective orientation and an in-service training program. These programs should be manned with people who can give an interesting presentation and spark enthusiasm among the volunteers. Anyone who looks upon these two jobs as routine should not be involved. It is essential that this person have the primary responsibility for the operation of the program.

Another important responsibility for volunteer leaders is selling the program to the public on a continuing basis. This means speaking to civic groups, appearing on local radio and television stations, and putting articles in local newspapers. "As a volunteer coordinator, I see my job as two-pronged. One is public relations, community involvement, and getting support for the schools through that involvement. With this support will come the opening of the doors by the teachers and administrators. The other element is coordinating the actual program." This coordinator confessed that he spends as much or more time in this public relations role as in his primary duty of dealing with learning problems.



volunteers — unencumbered by tradition

The success of the volunteer in teaching and learning will hinge in many school districts on

his ability to save students whom the professional teachers have had to give up on in deference to the rest of the class. It is an awesome task. Yet such students can and should be subjected to new and divergent methods of teaching in an effort to explore any avenue to rekindle a yearn to learn.

Time and personal interest are strong motivational factors in learning. A volunteer often is able to provide the time and interest which builds the child's self-image. *Because the volunteer can devote full time to one child, he can reinforce a child's feeling of success through constant adjustment to meet his needs first as a human and then as a learner.*

The Los Angeles City Unified School District Volunteer and Tutorial Programs issued a paper on the Neurological Impress Method which states that this technique is an efficient means of developing fundamental skills in reading among children classified as "remedial." It is a unison-reading process whereby the student and a volunteer tutor read aloud simultaneously, at a normal rate of speed.

This method of instruction has proven successful. Children with severe handicaps in reading were given a maximum of seven hours of instruction by this method during a period of six weeks with a resultant average of 2.2 grade levels of growth in functional reading skill. This gain is in itself impressive, but more impressive is the simplicity of the method and its application by volunteers.

Prior to the first reading session, a variety of appropriate material is selected by the child's teacher. The student should be allowed to choose the reading material he likes.

When the material has been chosen, the reader is placed slightly to the front of the volunteer with the student and the volunteer holding the book jointly. As the student and volunteer read the same material in unison, the voice of the volunteer is directed into the ear of the student. During the first session, the volunteer should read louder and slightly faster than the student. In most instances the volunteer has his right hand free and he is able to use his finger as a locator. He slides his finger along the line following the words that are being spoken. The finger must be at the location of the spoken word.

In order to establish the normal flow of good reading patterns, the student should not be corrected at any time and should be encouraged to refrain from stopping on difficult words or returning to words he has already read. He is told to slide across the words to the end of the page, to try to imagine he is sliding on ice, and to make no effort to think he is reading.

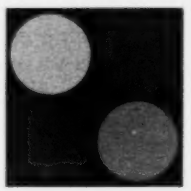
As the student and the volunteer read together, the volunteer accompanies the words he is reading with a smooth continuous motion of the index finger under the sentence at precisely the same speed and flow of the oral reading. Later in the session, the student is allowed to take over this activity, but if coordination is difficult the volunteer imposes his finger and takes over the duties of sliding along the words.

As the sessions progress and as the opportunities present themselves, the volunteer lowers his voice or reduces his speed so there is an infinitesimal lag behind the student's reading. When the student falters he is reinforced by increased loudness and speed.

The approach to the reading is spontaneous, and as few pauses as possible are made in this reading process. The goal is to cover as many pages of reading material as can be done in the time available and without causing physical discomfort to the student. Dryness of mouth and fatigue of voice are two types of discomfort that might be experienced.

At no time does the volunteer attempt to teach the sounds of the words or word recognition. No attention is called to accompanying pictures or content of the story. After the reading session, the student is not asked about what he was reading. The volunteer always comments positively as to the success of the student and calls his attention to the smoothness with which he is reading and suggests to him that he is now able to read alone. Any positive motivation and stimulation that can honestly be given to the child is important to his rapid mastery of the skill of reading.

It must be remembered that volunteers are neophytes to teaching but with many unique skills that can be capitalized upon if given proper direction. Obviously, the volunteer cannot be allowed free reign. He must have a specific function in the scheme of sound educational practice. One coordinator put it succinctly when he stated flatly, "The strength of my program comes from the training we give our volunteers."



training – a key ingredient

A prime element for a successful volunteer program is a well-informed and competent volunteer. The volunteer should be knowledgeable about the objectives of the program, thoroughly understand what his role is to be, and be equipped with the skills necessary to make his assignment a pleasant and personally rewarding one.

Each volunteer should be selected according to the job to be done, the qualifications required for effective job performance, and the attitudes verbally expressed and indirectly revealed. With a careful and sensitive assignment policy, most programs find spots for all desiring to serve, regardless of the uniqueness of an individual request. The primary consideration is the capacity of volunteers to extend services to the student, schools, or agencies. A secondary consideration is the satisfaction and enrichment volunteers experience through their service.

Training activities are a means of involving volunteers in the program quickly, thereby maintaining their interest and developing their skills before they receive a specific job assignment. Through training, volunteers may discover they are more interested in another type of assignment than the one for which they originally signed up.

In planning training activities, it is necessary to make a distinction between orientation and training. Orientation acquaints the volunteer with the policies, procedures, and goals of the program and sponsoring agency or organization. Training should develop concrete skills to accomplish specific tasks. Orientation should be an introduction to voluntaryism and to the school system or agency the volunteer will be serving. It should give the volunteer an understanding of his role. The training that follows orientation is more specific and operational. It should be so structured that the volunteer knows immediately why materials are presented and how they will be used on the job.

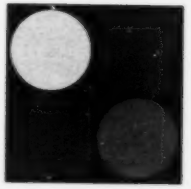
The volunteer must have a basic concept of teaching methods, be familiar with materials and equipment available and proficient in their use, and work well under teacher or administrative guidance. Basic concepts and priorities should be covered in reading, mathematics, science, language, music, and art. The volunteer should study the materials used by the school.

Parent volunteers have utilized phonics kits and readers to give individualized instruction, have tutored small groups within the classroom on conceptual difficulties, and assisted students in filmstrip caption reading. Most important of all, the volunteer is another pair of eyes and ears in the classroom that students can turn to for individualized or additional help.

It is important that the volunteer completely understands the nature of a proposed assignment. Obviously, all volunteer duties should contribute to the child's learning. Clear consensus on job expectations from the beginning can reduce the likelihood of later disappointment and dissatisfaction. Failure to define adequately the role to be assumed by a volunteer is a major reason for persons dropping out of a volunteer program.

In a successful program the volunteer will work under the direction and supervision of a teacher or other professional staff member. In no instance should a volunteer ever be placed in a classroom without teacher guidance and direction. The ultimate aim is service, and the school must provide a protective wing to give the volunteer stability. Optimum efficiency results through careful teacher planning with the volunteer.

Orientation also can be a good method of recruiting parents and getting more public understanding of school operation. One elementary school which holds an orientation course on school procedures and teaching methods encourages and solicits participation by students' parents as well as the incoming volunteers. The principal reported that parents find this training class interesting, informative, and helpful whether or not they choose to become volunteers. Parents get insight into the elementary school expectations and goals for children of this age.



volunteers as a source of enrichment

"It seems to me that what we are striving to do is relate the world outside to the school process. The world outside is the community and the business structure is a very important part of the community. How do you relate them?" This veteran volunteer's own work has been to encourage community-oriented programs rather than being a part of the school organization or the school structure. "We are trying to bring a method into the school curriculum that will prepare the children for life after they leave school and to make their own living as we were taught when we were youngsters."

Volunteers can enrich the curriculum in areas requiring special skills or unique experiences. They may speak to classes on topics related to occupations. These volunteers can be businessmen, engineers, lawyers, or doctors. They might possess valuable unique skills in the areas of shop, homemaking, or speaking a foreign language. They can work with children who have problems of adjustment in the regular classroom situation or in implementing instructional activities for individuals or groups of special education students. Volunteers have been used to read and check themes for those writing skills indicated by the teacher. Others work in the language and science laboratories of the school.

New programs should specialize in one or two areas in which they can be most effective, rather than attempt to diversify over too many problems.

Drugs, ecology, family planning, and finance are wide-open routes into the classroom for the use of volunteers in teaching and learning. Here the volunteer group can gather and prepare materials, plan and execute field trips, and give prepared presentations on these timely topics that have been mishandled or even ignored in the established school curriculum. The school administrator who sees the need for these subjects in the school but cannot integrate them likely will welcome a carefully planned volunteer program that is professionally carried out.

Individuals with special interests, talents, skills, or hobbies often are compiled and listed in a central office resource file and are willing to come to the schools to help enrich and supplement a unit of study. These volunteers may do some of the following:

- Speak to classes about a particular subject on which he is an authority
- Act as a resource for science, social studies, and other disciplines in the curriculum in response to a request for such enrichment
- Show slides or films and talk about foreign countries or interesting areas he has visited
- Give special performances or demonstrations in the arts, music, or sciences
- Speak to classes on career opportunities in his particular vocation
- Display special collections such as stamps, photographs, costumes, dolls, and coins

Usually, these resource volunteers are assigned individually to fill special requests from teachers for cultural and curricular enrichment. Each program should be considered for its merit in fitting into a unit of study, suitability for certain age groups, and its quality of content and presentation.

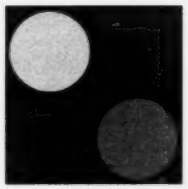
It is surprising how many young people do not understand the business world where their own parents earn the money that supports the family. Volunteers are a ready means of bringing the world outside into the school curriculum. They can integrate industry into the school curriculum in a complete, comprehensive, cooperative manner.

There is one tragic waste of a free learning resource available to any school in virtually every community capable of carrying out such an integrated curriculum. That resource is the senior citizen, an entity whose quantity now numbers over 20 million people.* This is nearly 10% of the nation's population.

Properly utilized, the senior citizen can become a major community resource for providing children with educational enrichment. Terminating an active career often leaves the retiree with a meaningless existence. Many times the result is deteriorating physical and emotional health. Volunteerism is one way to thwart this. Officials of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare report that with some training and supervision, elderly persons have demonstrated a talent for working positively with the lonely and withdrawn child on a one-to-one basis.

That senior citizens have a positive contribution to make to schools is readily demonstrated by a program started in 1959 by a retired businessman who participated in the seminar. He persuaded other retirees to become involved as volunteers in a local school project designed to increase motivation for underachievers in an elementary school. Due to this particular project's success, similar programs have been started in 20 adjacent communities. Teachers are reporting excellent success and satisfaction in working with older volunteers.

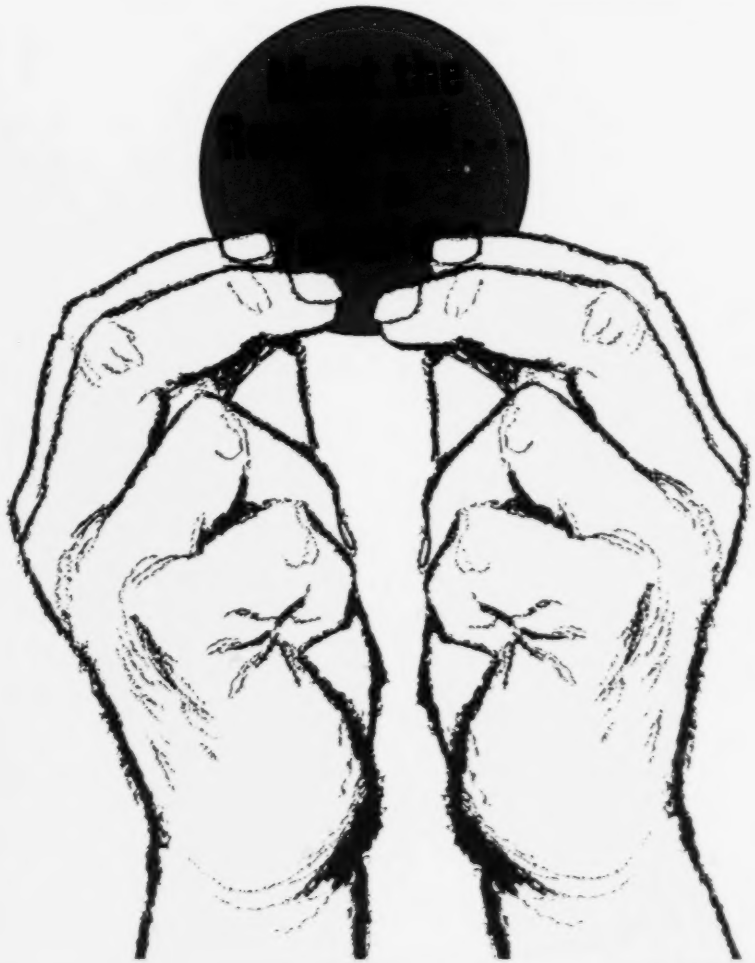
The concept of garnering help from those with experience, knowledge, and time to share is a natural one with a long heritage. Through the ages, the elders of the village or tribe universally have instructed the young children in the ways of their culture and the local community. Only with the institutionalization of education has the older citizen's instructional role been negated. Now, with mandatory retirement coupled to an increased life span, the senior citizens are being recognized as a valuable resource available to help schools, teachers, and children.



what the volunteer can do

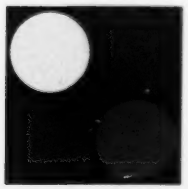
The volunteer's forte in teaching and learning is that he can start where the child is successfully operating at present in the subject matter and proceed slowly into what he needs to learn. The professional teacher rarely can do this in a classroom situation. The volunteer also can end the session with a successful experience. He is able to foster the idea that, as the child meets success, he can learn.

Another volunteer value is to provide a positive adult relationship with the child, to give individualized assistance, and to enrich the child's experiences. "The important factor in the volunteer-child relationship is that the volunteer is able to give the child individual attention. Self-esteem and self-confidence are basic to learning. The personal interest the volunteer takes in the child may well be the catalyst that makes him recognize his own worth and ability to achieve.



After establishing the proper rapport with the student, a trained volunteer can initiate a discussion of speech irregularities with the student. This individualized joint effort at speech improvement may make a student less self-conscious. It is of utmost importance that any tutorial work begin well within the student's level of comprehension. This can be done in reading work by having the child's current reader, one at a lower reading level, and one at a higher reading level available at the first session with the student. Have him read aloud from the easiest book. If he makes no more than two errors per hundred words, he can read this one without the volunteer's help. However, the volunteer may want to begin with this book in order to provide an atmosphere of success and establish a good working relationship. If the student makes from two to five errors per hundred words, the book is at the best level for tutoring. If he makes six or more errors per hundred words, the book is too hard for him. Future lessons can be varied by reading a difficult book aloud to the student.

Some of the best teaching advice for the volunteer tutor is, "The less work you do for your tutee the better." While it is quicker, easier, and less frustrating for the adult volunteer to do a problem or an assignment, it is of little permanent help to the student. "Help him learn how to do his own work." A discussant emphasized the tutor's task as, "listening, asking questions, and getting the child to think for himself."



Schools which have utilized nonprofessional volunteers report that the students worked better and that dealing with student problems was much enhanced. With two or more adults in the classroom, discipline problems and teacher fatigue are reduced.

Classes run smoother with a higher degree of purposeful activity. Teachers are relaxed and, as a result, are more effective. Subgrouping and scheduling of students for small-group instruction becomes possible with students getting much more individual attention.

The initial step in designing a good learning assistance program is determining what needs the program can meet. Working with teachers and school administrators, the coordinator utilizes a list of available volunteers to decide which needs can be realistically met through volunteer services. With the needs in mind, objectives for the program are written out. This involvement of key school staff and volunteer leaders in the decision making is critical in establishing rapport and defining the roles of all involved.

The concise identification of goals and objectives assures the development of an effective, workable structure for the volunteer program. This type of identification also will assist greatly in recruiting volunteers. It gives the volunteer leaders specific goals about which to talk. "We are setting up a reading assistance program" is a far better statement than "We want to help the schools" when talking with potential volunteers.

Responding to educators' calls for individualized instruction, especially in assisting those who are educationally disadvantaged or have learning difficulties, volunteer programs supply many children with the additional motivation, reinforcement, and personal attention necessary for learning. The volunteer brings his own special expertise and interest to the classroom. In addition to offering free assistance to the teacher, he brings a freshness and enthusiasm to school that can serve to renew the interest of the most bored student. Through close personal interaction with the pupil, the volunteer becomes aware of the child's individual, emotional, and academic problems and needs.

A proven procedure in working with remedial students is to let the volunteers and the students meet together informally for one or two sessions before arrangements are made for pairing them up. Each volunteer then is assigned one, two, but no more than three below-grade-level students with which to work. The volunteer's job will be easier if the students are in the same grade. Sometimes changes may be necessary where a personality clash is evident. Such inevitable events should be accomplished quickly and quietly.

Various types of information about each volunteer and the individuals he works with should be obtained before, during, and at the end of their work. Such information is invaluable in measuring progress and evaluating the student's improvement. The needed information includes before-and-after work samples, test scores, student's personal opinion of the help he has received, and parental consent forms.

Pretesting is a way of measuring skills that the student needing help has acquired by the time he begins the program. By knowing which ones the student has acquired, the teacher can diagnose the unmastered skills which the volunteer can aid the child in developing. It is also a means of measuring the effectiveness of the program while it is in progress. This way changes can be made wherever they are indicated.

Research has proven that a student's performance and actions are greatly influenced by the concept his peers and elders hold of him. When a child's academic performance is inadequate, a low level of self-confidence can promote poor performance. A child sometimes feels that he has to live down to the expectations others have of him. Statistical analysis of an experimental project involving volunteers in one-to-one work with underachievers revealed that the experimental group improved significantly in attitudes toward reading, in confidence in applying such skills as use of the dictionary and reference books, in school attendance, and in enjoyment of school life. The gains were greater than could be attributed to change alone. No evidence of negative results was found in any of the areas measured.

proving the case for volunteers

Monitoring procedures assure that volunteers are fulfilling their assignments and provide for the compilation of data necessary for a year-end evaluative report. Periodically, the information is compiled from the reporting forms including types of volunteers, time sheets, services performed, and evaluation sheets from principals, teachers, volunteers, students, and parents. This information should be provided to the school officials and volunteer leaders. Evaluation of the information will reveal where the program can be changed and improved.

A year-end examination of program results should include a close check of operating plans and reaffirmation of the program's goals. "You must keep records and evaluations of the program available if for no other reason than to prove the value of the program," one participant pointed out. "Taking the number of volunteer hours donated in a single year and multiplying this by the minimum federal wage will give a sizeable sum of money that the school district received in free services."

volunteers – interregna to the community-centered school

The designation of "volunteer" does not describe the person's contribution to education but only the fact that he is not paid. "Do not ask volunteers to clean paint brushes or keep classroom registers," a discussant advised. This observation was put into philosophical and historical perspective by a participant who declared, "For a long time we had 'non-community' schools, then a philosophy developed that we were going to have to have a true community-centered school.

"This means the school moving into the community and the community moving into the school. It is impossible to pay enough people to carry this out satisfactorily. So the only move is to utilize volunteer workers. Otherwise we will never make the concept of the community-centered school a reality, because we can never pay enough people on our present payroll and revenue income to cover it.

"Basically, people are no longer willing to tax themselves to improve the schools which is what they did in the late '50's and early '60's. However, I do think they are willing to involve themselves and give their time. This is one of the few routes open to the enterprising educator of the '70's! The time for the volunteer program has come!"

IDEA

Executive Staff

Samuel G. Sava
Executive Director

John I. Goodlad
Director, Research Program; and
Dean, Graduate School of Education
UCLA

John M. Bahner
Director
Innovative Programs

B. Frank Brown
Director
Information and Services Program

Charles L. Willis
Program Officer

George T. Williams
Administrative Officer

Executive Office

Suite 300, 5335 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45429
(513) 434-7300

Research Program

Suite 950, 1100 Glendon Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90024
(213) 477-6033

Innovative Programs

Suite 300, 5335 Far Hills Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45429
(513) 434-7300

Information and Services Program

P. O. Box 446
Melbourne, Florida 32901
(305) 723-0211

Additional copies of this publication are available for $2.00 each and may be ordered from |I|D|E|A|, Mail Orders, P. O. Box 628, Far Hills Branch, Dayton, Ohio 45419. A complete catalog of |I|D|E|A| films and publications is available upon request.

"not connected in any way with IDEA, the publication of The PTC Research Institute of The George Washington University."